

Message Text

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42

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FM AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5406

INFO AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUJUMBURA 0399

KINSHASA FOR BUCHANAN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, BY, US

SUBJECT: MEETINGS IN BURUNDI OF AF/C DIRECTOR BUCHANAN

1. AF/C DIRECTOR BUCHANAN'S FORTY-EIGHT HOURS IN BUJUMBURA WERE VERY HECTIC, BUT MOST REWARDING, AT LEAST AS FAR AS THIS EMBASSY IS CONCERNED. IN ADDITION TO MEETING DIRECTORS GENERAL IN MINISTRIES OF ECONOMICS, AGRICULTURE, AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS, HE SPENT 40 MINUTES WITH FOREIGN MINISTER. AND A SUPPOSED TEN MINUTE COURTESY CALL ON PRESIDENT MICOMBERO TURNED INTO A 20 MINUTE MORNING CHAT WHICH WAS RESUMED IN LATE AFTERNOON AND CONTINUED UNTIL 2300 HOURS. IN ADDITION, HE MET SENIOR OFFICERS OF FRENCH, BELGIAN, AND WEST GERMAN EMBASSIES, AS WELL AS UNDP DEPUTY CHIEF.

2. WITH BURUNDIAN OFFICIALS, BUCHANAN NOTED THAT DEPARTMENT HAS NOW TAKEN THE POSITION THAT THE U.S. SHOULD HAVE A MODEST BILATERAL AID PROGRAM IN BURUNDI, AND THAT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS STAND IS NOW PROCEEDING THROUGH THE WASHINGTON BUREAUCRACY. TO FOREIGN MINISTER, HE ADDED THAT ALL AID PROGRAMS DEPEND ULTIMATELY ON CONGRESSIONAL GOOD WILL, AND THAT CONGRESS HAS MADE CLEAR ITS CONCERNS OVER SUCH ISSUES AS KOREA, MIDDLE EAST, AND PUERTO RICO, WHERE SUPPOSEDLY FRIENDLY NATIONS ADOPT POSITIONS WHICH DIRECTLY RUN ATHWART U.S. NATIONAL INTERESTS. FONMIN (BWAKIRA) REPLIED THAT BURUNDI'S STANDS WERE DETERMINED

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BY ITS PRINCIPLES (UNDEFINED), AND THAT THESE COULD NOT BE

BARGAINED AWAY IN EXCHANGE FOR FOREIGN AID. BURUNDI SUPPORTED THE NORTH KOREAN POSITION OF PEACEFUL UNIFICATION OF KOREA WITHOUT FOREIGN INTERFERENCE (I.E., A U.S. TROOP PRESENCE). IT ALSO BACKED THE PALESTINIAN CAUSE AND OPPOSED ZIONISM. PUERTO RICO MIGHT BE SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT, SINCE IT WAS FAR AWAY, SINCE BURUNDI KNEW LITTLE ABOUT IT, AND SINCE IT WAS OF NO DIRECT CONCERN TO BURUNDI. HE ALSO NOTED THAT A U.S. FOREIGN AID PROGRAM COULD BEST BE STARTED BY NEGOTIATING AN UMBRELLA AID ACCORD, WITHIN WHICH EACH PROJECT COULD FIT. HE WAS NON-COMMITTAL ON A PEACE CORPS PRESENCE WITHIN AN AID PROGRAM, BUT LOOKED FORWARD TO WELCOMING AID CENTRAL AFRICAN DIRECTOR GRIFFITH IN JULY.

3. I COMMENTED THAT WE THOUGHT THAT AMERICAN POSITIONS ON INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL QUESTIONS CORRESPONDED VERY WELL WITH BURUNDI'S PROFESSED PRINCIPLES, AND THAT I WOULD SEEK LATER SESSION TO REVIEW UNGA ISSUES IN MORE DETAIL. HE SAID HE WILL LEAD HIS DELEGATION TO UNGA, AND WE OFFERED TO HELP ARRANGE ANY VISITS IN U.S. WHICH HE MIGHT WISH TO MAKE, INCLUDING WASHINGTON.

4. HOURS OF CONVERSATION WITH PRESIDENT MICOMBERO WERE INFORMAL (EXCEPT FOR MORNING CHAT) AND RAMBLING. BASIC AIM OF MICOMBERO WAS TO SHOW HIS GOOD WILL AND FRIENDLINESS TO U.S., EVEN THOUGH THE TALK WAS AT TIMES INTERSPERSED WITH CRITICISMS OF EACH OTHER'S POLICIES (E.G., IN ANGOLA), NO POINTS WERE PRESSED TO ANY REAL CONCLUSION. AFTER LEAVING, PRESIDENT TOLD FRIEND TWICE THAT HE LIKED AND RESPECTED BUCHANAN. MICOMBERO REPEATEDLY REAFFIRMED BURUNDI'S FERVENT DESIRE TO HAVE A TANGIBLE U.S. AID PROJECT HERE ("SO THAT I CAN DEDICATE IT AND SHOW MY PEOPLE THAT U.S. IS THEIR FRIEND"), AND HE PROMISED WARM WELCOMETO GRIFFITH (AID) WHEN HE COMES IN JULY. IN PASSING, HE TEASED US OVER NON-VISIT OF SECRETARY KISSINGER TO BURUNDI EVEN THOUGH HE FLEW OVER IT, BUT WE NOTED THAT VISITS HAD FOCUSED ON SOUTHERN AFRICAN PROBLEM AND ON NATIONS WHERE BILATERAL RELATIONS WERE ALREADY WELL ESTABLISHED AND IMPORTANT. WE HOPED THIS WOULD DEVELOP WITH BURUNDI, BUT SO FAR, WE WERE JUST STARTING.

MARK

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